

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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SUBJECT: CULCON: CURATOR CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

1. DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN INFORMED BY PHIL STERN OF FREER GALLERY THAT JAPANESE ARE SENDING ONLY TWO REPRESENTATIVES TO CURATOR CONFERENCE IN D.C., AUGUST 11 - 13. THESE ARE TOISHI, KENZO, FORMERLY OF THE TOKYO NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES (BIJUTSU KENKYUJO) AND NOW RETIRED; AND NISHIKAWA, KIYOTARO FROM THE BUNKACHO.

2. STERN DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED BY THIS APPARENT LACK OF INTEREST IN CONFERENCE BY JAPANESE SIDE, BECAUSE BASIC PURPOSE OF CONFERENCE -- VIZ., TO SEEK OUT AND ESTABLISH MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM TOLERANCE FOR THE CARE AND PROTECTION OF ART WORKS IN MUSEUM INTERCHANGE BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE U.S. (AND EVENTUALLY JAPAN AND OTHER COUNTRIES) -- IS IN JAPAN'S OWN INTEREST. STERN ALSO BELIEVES ONE REASON FOR UNENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE MAY BE THE FACT THAT THE PROPOSAL FOR CURATOR CONFERENCE AT CULCON VII CAME FROM KURATA, BUNSAKA, FORMER COUNSELOR OF BUNKACHO, WHO ATTENDED CULCON VII IN ADACHI'S ABSENCE, AND SINCE RELATIONS BETWEEN ADACHI AND KURATA ARE NOT SMOOTH, ADACHI MAY HAVE WITHHELD
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HIS FULL SUPPORT.

3. WHAT STERN FEELS IS NECESSARY IS AS WIDESPREAD JAPANESE REPRESENTATION AS POSSIBLE, INCLUDING THOSE WITH

SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE AS WELL AS MUSEUM DIRECTORS WITH ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE: E.G., FROM THE KYOTO AND NARA MUSEUMS. WITH ONLY TWO JAPANESE PARTICIPANTS, ONE A RETIRED OFFICIAL AND THE OTHER A RELATIVELY LOW-RANKING BUREAUCRAT, AND AS YET NO JAPANESE INPUT INTO AGENDA, STERN VERY CONCERNED THAT THE JAPANESE DELEGATES WILL NOT HAVE THE NECESSARY AUTHORITY OR WEIGHT TO MAKE THE RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM CONFERENCE BINDING.

4. DEPARTMENT SHARES STERN'S CONCERN AND REQUESTS THAT EMBASSY APPROACH BUNKACHO AND PLACE CURATOR CONFERENCE IN PROPER LIGHT SO AS TO ENCOURAGE GREATER PARTICIPATION BY APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIVES (AT LEAST FIVE). AMONG ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS, EMBASSY MAY WISH REFER TO CULCON VII FINAL COMMUNIQUE (SECTION C. "MUSEUM EXCHANGE", PARA 3) WHICH READS: "THE IMPORTANCE OF TECHNICAL STUDIES IN THE CARE AND PRESERVATION OF WORKS OF ART IS A MAJOR CONCERN. IN ORDER TO EVALUATE THE PROBLEM AND COME UP WITH CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT STUDY GROUPS IN JAPAN AND THE U.S. BE CREATED WITHIN 60 TO 90 DAYS INCLUDING BOTH TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS AND CURATORS. IT IS ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT THESE STUDY GROUPS MEET TOGETHER IN A YEAR'S TIME TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO STANDARDS FOR CARE AND PRESERVATION OF WORKS OF ART. THIS GROUP SHALL MEET PERIODICALLY."

5. FYI: JOHN MCDONALD WILL HAVE WITH HIM AGENDA AND LIST OF DELEGATES OF CONFERENCE. LETTER INVITING ADACHI TO ATTEND WILL BE SENT THROUGH DURWARD VARNER, CHAIRMAN OF MUSEUM EXCHANGE SUBCOMMITTEE. INGERSOLL

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